



General Assembly

***Substitute Bill No. 6486***

*January Session, 2009*

\*       HB06486JUD             041409       \*

***AN ACT CONCERNING RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD AND STRONG FAMILIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1       Section 1. Section 17b-27a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2       following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

3       (a) There is established within the Department of Social Services,  
4       within available appropriations, the John S. Martinez Fatherhood  
5       Initiative. Said initiative shall promote the positive involvement and  
6       interaction of fathers with their children with an emphasis on children  
7       eligible or formerly eligible for services funded by the temporary  
8       assistance for needy families block grant and shall identify those  
9       services that effectively encourage and enhance responsible and  
10      skillful parenting and those services that increase the ability of fathers  
11      to meet the financial and medical needs of their children through  
12      employment services and child support enforcement measures. The  
13      objectives of the initiative shall be to: (1) Promote public education  
14      concerning the financial and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood;  
15      (2) assist men in preparation for the legal, financial and emotional  
16      responsibilities of fatherhood; (3) promote the establishment of  
17      paternity at childbirth; (4) encourage fathers, regardless of marital  
18      status, to foster their emotional connection to and financial support of  
19      their children; (5) establish support mechanisms for fathers in their

20 relationship with their children, regardless of their marital and  
21 financial status; and (6) integrate state and local services available for  
22 families.

23 (b) Not later than February 1, 2010, the Commissioner of Social  
24 Services shall report to the select committee of the General Assembly  
25 having cognizance of matters relating to children, in accordance with  
26 the provisions of section 11-4a, regarding (1) the effectiveness of any  
27 child support arrears management efforts; (2) the effectiveness of any  
28 efforts aimed at reducing teen fatherhood; (3) the number of  
29 noncustodial parents participating in job training programs; (4) the  
30 number of newly employed noncustodial parents; and (5) the number  
31 of noncustodial parents with incomes at or below the federal poverty  
32 level.

33 (c) The commissioner shall seek to obtain any available federal and  
34 private funds for programs that promote the objectives described in  
35 subsection (a) of this section. If such funds are obtained, the  
36 commissioner shall award grants to entities for such programs, as  
37 provided in subsection (d) of this section.

38 (d) The Department of Social Services shall award grants to entities  
39 under this section for programs and services that provide (1)  
40 employment and training opportunities for low-income fathers to  
41 increase the earning capacity of such fathers; (2) classes in parenting  
42 and financial management; and (3) other support services and  
43 programs that promote responsible parenting, financial stability and  
44 communication and interaction between fathers and their children.

45 (e) Applicants for grants provided pursuant to this section shall  
46 apply to the Commissioner of Social Services at such time and in such  
47 manner as the commissioner prescribes. The commissioner shall  
48 establish criteria for eligibility for grants and for the awarding of  
49 grants pursuant to this section. The commissioner shall require a  
50 grantee to (1) implement accountability measures and results-based  
51 outcomes as a condition of being awarded a grant; and (2) leverage

52 funds through existing resources and collaboration with community-  
 53 based and nonprofit organizations.

54 (f) Not later than October 1, 2010, and annually thereafter, the  
 55 commissioner shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a, to the  
 56 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance  
 57 of matters relating to human services and the select committee of the  
 58 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children on  
 59 the grant program's effectiveness in achieving the objectives specified  
 60 in subsection (a) of this section.

61 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) As used in this section,  
 62 "child support matter" means all actions under chapter 816 of the  
 63 general statutes.

64 (b) The Chief Court Administrator shall establish, within existing  
 65 resources, a problem solving docket, in one or more court locations, for  
 66 the hearing of child support matters separate from dockets for other  
 67 matters. The Superior Court or the Family Court Magistrate Division  
 68 may transfer any child support matter to the problem solving docket.  
 69 The problem solving docket shall provide assistance to noncustodial  
 70 parents who are in arrears on child support payments.

71 (c) The Chief Court Administrator shall establish policies and  
 72 procedures to implement the provisions of this section. Not later than  
 73 July 1, 2010, the Chief Court Administrator shall submit a report, in  
 74 accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, on such program  
 75 to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
 76 cognizance of matters relating to human services.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2009	17b-27a
Sec. 2	October 1, 2009	New section

**KID****Joint Favorable Subst. C/R****HS**

***HS***      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

***JUD***      *Joint Favorable*